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Preserving Lincoln  
for the Ages:  
Collectors, Collections,  
and Our  
Sixteenth President

by  
RALPH GEOFFREY NEWMAN

The Sixth Annual R. Gerald McMurtry Lecture  
DELIVERED AT FORT WAYNE, INDIANA, 1983

THE LOUIS A. WARREN LINCOLN LIBRARY AND MUSEUM  
is a memorial tribute to the life and contributions of Abraham Lincoln. § The lecture series honors Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry, the second director of the Library and Museum. Each year a distinguished Lincoln scholar will be invited to Fort Wayne to present a paper on some aspect of the Lincoln theme.



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(continued)

PRESERVING LINCOLN FOR THE AGES:  
COLLECTORS, COLLECTIONS, AND OUR  
SIXTEENTH PRESIDENT



PRESERVING LINCOLN  
FOR THE AGES

*COLLECTORS, COLLECTIONS, AND  
OUR SIXTEENTH PRESIDENT*

RALPH GEOFFREY NEWMAN

LOUIS A. WARREN  
LINCOLN LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

1989

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The sixth annual R. Gerald McMurtry Lecture  
was delivered in the Board Room at  
The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company  
in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on May 19, 1983.

“What is a great love of books? It is something like a personal introduction to the great and good men [and women] of all past times. Books, it is true, are silent as you see them on their shelves; but, silent as they are, when I enter a library I feel almost as if the dead were present, and I know that if I put questions to these books they will answer me with all the faithfulness and fullness which has been left in them by the great men who have left the books with us.”

JOHN BRIGHT

*English orator and statesman*

1811–1889



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**F**OR MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS I have been involved in the delightful profession of accumulating and distributing the books, manuscripts, photographs, paintings, and artifacts relating to the life and times of one of the most interesting human beings the world has ever known. When I started my work there were persons around who had been alive when Abraham Lincoln was living. My grandfather was twenty-three years old when Lincoln died and lived to be 88 in my nineteenth year; I remember his telling me about Mr. Lincoln and the Civil War. As a boy I can recall going to the Chicago Historical Society to hear Julia Taft Bayne speak. She had been a playmate of Willie and Tad Lincoln in the White House. Her brother had been one of the physicians present at the President's death on Saturday morning, April 15, 1865.

Mr. Lincoln is very real to me. He is both an historical personality and someone I seem to know so well that I feel his presence almost constantly—it's as if he just stepped out of the room but will be returning shortly. Knowing people like Carl Sandburg, Walter S. Holden, F. Lauriston Bullard, James Rosenthal, and Frederick Hill Meserve, who in their youth had known many individuals who had been close friends of Abraham Lincoln, made the great Prairie Lawyer and President seem very close. He was a sort of vicarious contemporary and, for that matter, still is.

There has been some kind of publication—book, pamphlet, leaflet, magazine article, broadside, etc.—issued on an average of once a week since the first publication by or referring to Abraham Lincoln appeared almost a hundred-and-fifty years ago. There

are more than 120 photographs of Lincoln, with thousands of offspring in the form of etchings, engravings, prints, drawings, etc. Several thousand letters and documents in his hand and signed by him exist, plus an incredible amount of written material about him—by contemporaries and by many who lived in the 118 years since his death.

I am delighted and honored to be invited to speak in this institution and to deliver a lecture in the series named for and honoring one of my oldest and dearest friends. My subject is too long to cover in a lecture. I have discovered what I should have known—it is a proper subject for several books. However, I shall discuss the subject—too briefly for some of you and, I suspect, too long for others.

The book collector is involved in what the greatest of all booksellers, Abraham Simon Wolf Rosenbach, the legendary “Dr. R.,” called the most exhilarating sport of all. Vincent Starrett, that wise and whimsical bibliophile, observed that “the most misunderstood man upon earth is the collector of books, . . . even earnest men of letters, students and scholars whose lives are lived among volumes old and new, often regard him with emotions ranging between amusement and suspicion.”<sup>1</sup> When I was a very young bookseller, a veteran bookseller tried to advise me as to how to deal with my customers. He said to always remember that “while you don’t have to be crazy, it helps.” Of course, it isn’t true, but it might well be said of the book and manuscript seller instead.

Book collecting in America dates back to the Reverend Thomas Prince of eighteenth century Boston. While he was a student at Harvard, he conceived the plan of building a New England library. After graduation, he travelled by a circuitous route to London, where he served as a pastor at Combs and at Bottisford. He returned to Boston and eventually became the associate pastor of what became the famous Old South Church in 1718. With his meager salary, he could only afford to buy a few books, but he was

a master at borrowing. It was by this latter method that he acquired for his New England Library Governor William Bradford's "History of Plymouth Plantation."<sup>2</sup> The Prince library catalogue in 1846 recorded the ownership of five copies of the "Bay Psalm Book," printed in Cambridge in 1640, the first book printed in English America. Since only eleven copies of the book are known to exist, this was an outstanding feat of book collecting.

By the time of the Lincoln administration, great collectors like George Ticknor, James Carter Brown, James Lenox, and George Brinley had made their impact on American book collecting and the building of great libraries. These men were followed by Lyman Copeland Draper and Hubert Howe Bancroft, and the stage was set for the Lincoln collectors beginning in 1865.

A survey of some of the available data on the collecting of Lincolniana identifies more than two-hundred-and-fifty individuals who had or have assembled collections of one thousand or more items—mainly books, but including manuscripts, photographs, prints, artifacts, and numismatic and philatelic material. Such a roll call is not appropriate in this study. In some future edition, it might be a useful appendix.

A study of the activities of these Lincoln collectors, their interests, and periods of activities, suggests five logical areas or eras in which these individuals might be studied. An examination of some of the outstanding men and women who assembled notable collections within these classifications seems to be the best manner in which to tell the story of those who helped preserve Lincoln for the ages.

#### I. THE FOUNDER AND THE KEEPER OF THE FLAME

No study can begin without putting the spotlight on the two men who are placed in the first period—Abraham Lincoln and Robert Todd Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth president of the United States, started it all in more ways than by merely going to

Gettysburg or to Ford's Theatre. Though he often protested that he was not a collector, he was indeed one. The man who carefully clipped the reports of his debates with Stephen A. Douglas; who copied out the words of William Knox's "Mortality"; and for whom the public printer bound some of his most important presidential speeches, was certainly exhibiting the traits of an intelligent and highly selective collector. When, in July 1947, 82 years after his death, the Lincoln papers were opened to the public, the greatest treasure trove of Lincolniana attested to its creator's or collector's concern with the preservation of the Lincoln story.

Abraham Lincoln certainly wrote like a collector when, in 1848, he penned the words, "In this troublesome world, we are never quite satisfied."<sup>3</sup> Twelve years later, he wrote what is still the best advice for a collector, "Get the books, and read, and study them carefully."<sup>4</sup> On April 10, 1865, speaking to a rejoicing crowd at the White House, he added a song to his collection. "I have always thought 'Dixie' one of the best tunes I have ever heard. Our adversaries over the way attempted to appropriate it, but I insisted . . . that we fairly captured it. . . ." A century later, his great-grandson demonstrated that he had inherited some of the collecting instinct when, at a centennial celebration in Springfield, he said, "Please ask the band to play 'Dixie.'"

Two years ago Mark Neely pointed out that C. V. Schlater had asked Lincoln for his autograph.<sup>5</sup> In his reply, in 1849, Lincoln, like many a later collector, erred when he wrote, "If you collect the signatures of all persons who are no less distinguished than I, you will have a very undistinguishing mass of names."<sup>6</sup> Writing to William H. Fry in 1862, he demonstrated the true philosophy of the collector when he said, "You are in error if you suppose any important portion of my correspondence escapes my notice. Every thing requiring my action or attention is brought to my notice."<sup>7</sup> It is not the complete collector who comments, "I shall not surrender this game leaving any available card unplayed."<sup>8</sup>

At noon on Saturday, April 15, 1865, Robert Lincoln sent a telegram to Associate Justice of the Supreme Court David Davis, who was in Chicago, which said, "Please come to Washington at once to take charge of my father's affairs." Davis left for Washington on April 16 and eight days later, in a letter to his brother-in-law, Judge Julius Rockwell, described the previous week and then wrote, "I went on with the remains to Baltimore, Saturday, and have been busy getting his papers ready to take to Illinois." Abraham Lincoln had brought some papers with him to Washington. He had left the bulk of his legal papers with his partner, William H. Herndon, and had turned over some of his literary and personal papers to Mrs. Elizabeth Todd Grimsley, Mary Lincoln's cousin, to keep until his return. Among the papers he brought with him were a great quantity of the pre- and post-convention correspondence of 1860, as well as much of the mail which had accumulated after he had become President-elect in November, 1860. There were also letters and memorandums covering the period between 1834, when he was in the Illinois legislature, and 1860. He could not anticipate that he would not be able to reclaim his legal papers from Herndon, but fortunately, most of these papers did eventually find a permanent depository in the Library of Congress. As president, he did keep White House memoranda, copies of some of his important letters, printed copies of his own speeches, and other items of what we now term Lincolniana. He may have allowed John G. Nicolay and John Hay some freedom in weeding out unimportant correspondence, but he had to trust someone and, as David C. Mearns wrote, "Their appraisal had the soundness of intimate experience."<sup>9</sup>

At 7:22 A.M., Saturday, April 15, 1865, everything changed. The assassination brought on a literature of its own which continues to expand to this day. It also brought to center stage our second prime collector of Lincolniana, Robert Todd Lincoln.

With his father's death, the presidential papers came into his custody, and, make no mistake, they were his. From the administration of George Washington, the papers of the chief executive were assumed to be private papers and removed as each president left office. William Howard Taft, only two years out of office, explained the procedure to the University of Virginia in 1915:

The office of the president is not a recording office. The vast amount of correspondence that goes through it, signed either by the president or his secretaries, does not become the property or a record of the government unless it goes into the official files of the department to which it may be addressed. The president takes with him all of the correspondence, original and copies, carried on during his administration.<sup>10</sup>

The policy was changed by Act of Congress after the Nixon administration.

The Lincoln papers went from Washington to the vault of the National Bank of Bloomington, Illinois where they would be under the watchful eye of David Davis, the administrator of the Lincoln estate. There were almost 20,000 items in this archive. In July 1874, they were moved to the offices of the Marshall of the Supreme Court, John G. Nicolay, in Washington. Nicolay undertook the task of organizing the material so that he and John Hay could begin work on their massive biography, *Abraham Lincoln: A History*, which would appear in ten volumes in 1890.

Nicolay died in 1901, at which time the papers were divided into two sections. The main section, mainly manuscripts of the sixteenth president, in his hand, were stored in the vault of the National Capital Bank. The second section, mostly composed of letters to Abraham Lincoln, had been in the possession of Nicolay. When his daughter, Helen Nicolay, asked Robert Lincoln for guidance as to the further custody of the papers, he turned to John Hay, now President William McKinley's secretary of state. Hay had the papers placed in safe deposit in the State Department.<sup>11</sup>

When John Hay died in 1905, the papers were transferred to

Robert Lincoln's custody, and in 1906, were in the offices of the Pullman Company in Chicago. When Robert moved from Chicago to Washington, the papers accompanied him to his Georgetown residence. Late every spring, when he traveled in his private railroad car to Hildene, his summer residence in Manchester, Vermont, the papers would accompany him. In 1919, they were deposited in the Library of Congress. They were opened to the public on July 26, 1947, 21 years after Robert Todd Lincoln's death.

Though Robert Lincoln insisted on several occasions that he was not a collector, he had carefully preserved the papers of his father, had always insured that they were kept in a safe place, and, like other collectors, later in his life, enjoyed having them near him. He supplemented his father's collection with his own correspondence, research files, photographs, and letter-books. He made it a point to try to answer every letter directed to him about his father. Some of his replies necessitated research. He would go through his files and try to supply the information the writer requested, with the exception of those crank letters which were inevitable to a person in his position.

When his files and the forty-six volumes of his letter-books became available, after his granddaughter Mary Lincoln Beckwith's death, and through the generosity of Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith, the last direct descendant of the Civil War president, it was obvious that Robert had assembled a first-rate research file. There were folders labelled with the names of important events in his father's life: "Gettysburg," "Lincoln-Douglas Debates," "First Inaugural Address," etc. His letter-books contain copies of almost 24,000 letters he wrote as a lawyer, as a cabinet member, as minister to Great Britain, as head of the Pullman Company, and as an influential American citizen. A large number of these letters refer to his father and to his relationship with him. He discusses his presence at Lee's surrender to Grant in April 1865;

driving with his father to some of the Lincoln-Douglas debates; the strange incident when Edwin Booth saved his life in Jersey City; and his opinion of the George Gray Barnard statue of his father. He was indeed a collector in the sense that he was preserving information and material for future generations. The letter-books and his files are now in the Illinois State Historical Library. One of the files is labelled "M. L.'s Insanity File," and was given by Bob Beckwith to the above named institution—evidence that Robert Lincoln did not recklessly destroy important material.

## II. THE ERA OF THE CONTEMPORARIES, 1865-1907

William Vaughan Spencer was born in 1821. His name appears in the Boston city directories between 1852 and 1869 as a bookseller and publisher. He was active in the theatre in Boston, as a publisher of plays and as a friend of those individuals in the world of the theatre. His plates continued to be used for the printing of plays by two of the leading American play publishers: Samuel French of New York and Baker's Plays of Boston. In 1863, Spencer became a publisher of trade books and sometime during the next four years sold his printing plates for his plays to Samuel French. Among the authors he now published was John Stuart Mill. In 1865, he compiled and published *Lincolniana: In Memoriam*, in a limited edition of 250 copies. It was a handsomely produced book, with the title page printed in two colors, deckle-edges, and fine typography. It was one of the first books about the late president to be issued in a limited edition. The book contains the text of almost forty sermons, eulogies, speeches, and letters—all inspired by the assassination. The last section of the book has the subtitle "Bibliographical List of Books and Pamphlets; containing Sermons, Orations, Eulogies, Poems, or other papers relating to the Assassination, Death, and Funeral Obsequies of Abraham Lincoln." It records 231 printed items, and a note in-



forms the reader that this part of the volume “embraces only such works as are in the possession of the compiler of their volume.”<sup>12</sup> No record exists as to the disposition of this collection.

John B. Wright (1814–1893) was the assistant manager of the Boston Theatre when it opened in 1854. He edited plays for Spencer while he was associated with the Boston Theatre and later when he was stage manager of the Holliday Street Theatre in Baltimore. He later became the stage manager for Ford’s Theatre in Washington. He and his wife were present when President Lincoln was assassinated. One must wonder if Wright had any influence on Spencer’s Lincoln collecting and publishing.

Charles Henry Hart, the eighteen-year-old corresponding secretary of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia and already a collector, began assembling data for *Bibliographia Lincolniana*,<sup>13</sup> originally intended to be a supplement to William H. Herndon’s proposed Lincoln biography. It was published for private circulation in an edition of 25 copies and appears as Part I of Andrew Boyd’s *A Memorial Lincoln Bibliography*.<sup>14</sup> Both works were published in 1870. Hart later became an attorney, but after an injury in 1894 moved to New York, where he devoted the remainder of his life to art and literary criticism. He continued his collection and eventually sold it to William H. Lambert. Hart died in 1918.

Andrew Boyd was born in Dublin in 1836 and came to the United States in 1851. He settled in Troy and then Albany, New York, where he became a publisher of city directories. He also began collecting Lincolniana immediately after the death of the president. He compiled the work about which F. Lauriston Bullard was to say, many years later, “This 1870 Bibliography will always be accepted as the foundation for the great Lincolniana edifice that has since been erected.”<sup>15</sup> The first 86 pages of the Boyd volume contain mainly Charles H. Hart’s work. The balance

of the book is devoted to Boyd's bibliographical findings. Boyd omitted from his section of the book all "titles and large-paper copies mentioned in Part I."<sup>16</sup>

Hart's and Boyd's notes on editions, number of copies printed, and order of publication have withstood the test of time and still remain the authoritative commentary on the works they listed. It is interesting to note, however, that neither Hart nor Boyd lists the Spencer volume, which was published five years earlier. The Boyd collection was purchased by the Library of Congress in 1873 for \$1,000. The Library's records show that the collection consisted of 1,500 items, including books and pamphlets, medals, portraits, handbills, and tokens. Ainsworth Rand Spofford, then the Librarian of Congress, stated that the purchase covered everything "except such books and pamphlets as are already in the Library . . . only about two hundred articles."<sup>17</sup>

In the course of investigation and research for this paper, two additional "founding fathers" have been revealed. One, Charles W. Frederickson, seems to have been lost to all Lincoln literature. Born in Nova Scotia in 1823 of Danish and American Tory parentage, he came to the United States early in life and was trained as a printer. He later married the daughter of a cotton broker and was taken into his father-in-law's business. He was a government agent for cotton purchases during the Civil War, though he personally opposed the conflict. When he was criticized for his war views, Lincoln came to his defense, according to the only reference to Frederickson discovered.<sup>18</sup> He became a book collector at an early age and assembled a sizeable collection of Lincolniana. He retired from business in 1877 and devoted the last twenty years of his life to book collecting. He had a fine collection of Shakespeareana, which was sold at auction in 1886 and 1887. The last and most important sale of his books came after his death in May 1897. The amount realized at this sale was almost \$20,000—a very large amount for the time.

The fact that Frederickson's book collecting interests were so varied probably explains his failure to be identified as a collector of Lincolniana. His library contained many rare editions of the writings of Shelley, Lamb, Keats, and Washington Irving. Carl L. Cannon, in his *American Book Collectors and Collecting*, writes that Frederickson "had a tough but inquiring mind and a personality so marked that he stood out among collectors who could afford to spend far more than he."<sup>19</sup> Wearing a full beard and in a white linen coat with pockets bulging with books, he was a striking figure.

The second hitherto unknown "founding father" is known to students of the Civil War and Reconstruction and to those familiar with the history of the United States Congress. He is Edward McPherson, born in Gettysburg in 1830; member of the House of Representatives for eight terms; clerk of the House at various times between 1863 and 1891. He was the author of two very useful books to students of the 1861-70 period in our history, *Political History of the United States During the Great Rebellion*, issued in 1864, and *Political History of the United States During the Period of Reconstruction*, which appeared in 1871. However, his collecting interest was discovered by accident. Maury A. Bromson, a Boston bookseller, acquired a copy of the Reverend Edward F. Cutter's *Eulogy on Abraham Lincoln . . .*, 1865. Laid in the front of the publication, he found a letter from Cutter to W. Elliot Woodbury, dated May 18, 1865. Woodbury had evidently inquired about Lincoln and Civil War publications. Cutter, in his reply, writes: "The Honorable Edward McPherson, Clerk of the House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., has, so far as I know, the most complete collection of pamphlets, etc. relating to the war and Mr. Lincoln's death. I have sent him all I have collected and he has some 4,000 or more as he wrote me."<sup>20</sup> Nothing is known of the fate of the McPherson collection.

Much has been written about the "Big Five" of Lincoln collect-

ing, but only three were contemporaries of the Great Railsplitter from Illinois. Charles Woodberry McLellan, born in 1836; William Harrison Lambert, who was born in 1842; and Daniel Fish, born in 1848. They began their collections soon after Lincoln's death and, with their colleagues of the next era, began a competition which enriched their own libraries and finally the libraries of the institutions in which most of their collections ultimately were deposited. One of the collections, that of Daniel Fish of Minneapolis, became the first great collection acquired by the institution which is the sponsor of this lecture.

Joseph Lylé McCorison, Jr., who made a study of Lincoln collections and presented his findings in a lecture to the Boston Public Library in 1947, stated that "Daniel Fish easily stands out as the scholar of this group."<sup>21</sup> He was an indefatigable collector, though he did not begin collecting the funeral sermons and eulogies until comparatively late in the game and when the prices had risen considerably. But it is his *Lincoln Bibliography*, published in 1906, which makes his name one of the "immortals" in Lincoln collecting. Though his work has been criticized, sometimes rather severely, and has now been supplanted by the Monaghan bibliography,<sup>22</sup> which needs improvement also, he did establish a modern guide for collectors. He died on February 9 and was buried on February 12, 1924.

Lambert was the best informed collector in the "Big Five." He had been a soldier in the Civil War and was brevetted major coincident with his discharge from the service in 1865. He entered the insurance business and founded what was to become one of the largest and most successful agencies in the United States. In addition to Lincolniana, Lambert built an outstanding collection of books, manuscripts, and drawings by and about William Makespeace Thackeray. He also had a fine Civil War collection. His collections were sold at the Anderson Galleries in five sales which took place from January to April, 1914. Henry E. Hunt-

ington purchased many of the Lambert rarities for his library at these sales.

McLellan moved from Massachusetts to Springfield, Illinois when he was twenty years old and became a bank clerk in the Illinois capital. He probably had a slight acquaintance with Lincoln and the members of his family. When the Civil War began, he cast his lot with the South and served in the commissary department of the Confederate Army. When the war ended, he settled in New York City where he became a very successful businessman and banker. His collection consisted of books, manuscripts, broadsides, pamphlets, prints and periodical literature. His later years were spent in Champlain, New York, where he continued his collecting in retirement. He died in 1918 and his main Lincoln collection was purchased by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. as a gift to his alma mater, Brown University. His collection of periodical Lincolniana was sold to Albert H. Greenly, who later donated it to the Clements Library of the University of Michigan.

Two other collectors deserve mention in this era. John Edgar Burton, born in New Hartford, New York in 1837, came to the midwest in 1868. After four years as a school principal in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, he became active in real estate, iron and copper mining, and financial institutions. Never admitted to the rarified class of the "Big Five," he was regarded with some envy and, as Mark Neely has said, "curiosity."<sup>23</sup> He built a large library which included many subjects in addition to Lincoln. He encountered financial difficulties in 1898 and his collection was ultimately sold at auction in 1915.

Of his 14,000 volume library, almost 2,000 volumes were devoted to Lincoln. He disliked pamphlets as far as format was concerned and had many of his pamphlets bound in with blank pages to bulk them to book size. His fine collection is scattered throughout the many Lincoln collections. Included in his holdings were a presentation copy of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates

from Lincoln to John H. Littlefield and two pages of the Sum Book, the earliest example of Lincoln's writings. One of these pages became part of the Oliver Barrett collection and was bought for Justin G. Turner in the Barrett sale in 1952.

Osborn Hamilton Ingham Oldroyd, the last of our contemporaries, was born in Ohio in 1842. He served in the Twentieth Ohio Infantry from 1861 to 1865. He then was employed as an assistant steward in the National Soldiers Home in Dayton. He claimed to have begun collecting Lincolniana before the president's death. In 1883, he rented Lincoln's home in Springfield and continued to live in it as a custodian after Robert Lincoln donated the house to the State of Illinois. He moved to Washington in 1893 and installed his Lincoln collection in the Petersen house, where Lincoln died. His collection was on display and he made his livelihood from admission charges and from his writings. In 1926, the United States government purchased the collection for \$50,000, after Henry Ford had made a similar offer. Oldroyd remained as curator emeritus of the collection. He died in 1930. In 1932, the collection was moved to Ford's Theatre, after Congress appropriated funds to convert the theatre into a museum. Some of the material is now on display in the new museum, which was built under the theatre when it was restored and reopened in 1968.

### III. THE ERA OF THE CENTENNIAL AND ITS AFTERMATH, 1908-1922

A new and intense interest developed in Lincolniana, inspired by the centennial of his birth in 1909. This introduced "the era of the centennial and its aftermath" to this study of Lincoln collectors and collections. Some of the collectors of this period had already begun their collecting, but the many activities of the centennial year increased their interest. This period extends through 1922, the year in which the beautiful Lincoln Memorial was dedi-

cated. Of the many who became part of the Lincoln fraternity, ten have been singled out as among the leading collectors whose enthusiasm was kindled by the centenary.

The remaining members of the "Big Five" became active in this era. Judd Stewart, a businessman from Plainfield, New Jersey, accumulated a large, but not very discriminating collection. After his death it was revealed that some of his Lincoln letters were forgeries. In 1922, his heirs sold his collection to Henry E. Huntington.

The last member of the quintet was Joseph Benjamin Oakleaf, a Moline, Illinois attorney. His interest in Lincoln began with his reading Nicolay and Hay's *Abraham Lincoln: A History*,<sup>24</sup> as it was serialized in the *Century Magazine*.<sup>25</sup> His intensified collecting was inspired by the appearance of Daniel Fish's *Lincoln Bibliography* in 1906.<sup>26</sup> The flood of new publications preceding, during, and after the centennial year, enabled him to add many items to his collection at modest cost. Oakleaf did not buy rarities as such. He never paid high prices for the books and pamphlets he added to his collection. In 1942, when Indiana University purchased the Oakleaf collection, the institution hastily purchased additional rarities, such as the "Chicago Scripps"<sup>27</sup> to supplement the collection when it was opened to the public. Oakleaf's great contribution was his *Lincoln Bibliography*,<sup>28</sup> published in 1925, and listing almost 1,600 titles not in Fish. With the best of intentions, Oakleaf, who did not have any professional bibliographical training, was highly inaccurate or careless. For example, though he knew the name of the author of the anonymously published *New Gospel of Peace*,<sup>29</sup> Richard Grant White, he nevertheless listed the book under its title, not its author.

This was the era that brought to the fore the greatest of all Lincoln collectors, Oliver Rogers Barrett. Born in 1873, in Jacksonville, and reared in Pittsfield, Illinois, where John G. Nicolay had lived, he was introduced to collecting when his

mother gave him a collection which included many historical and literary documents accumulated by his grandfather and father. After being graduated from the University of Michigan Law School, he served briefly in the Spanish-American War, but saw no action. He commenced the practice of law and, in 1905, moved to Chicago, where he established a highly successful practice as a corporate attorney and trial lawyer.

With a very keen mind and a determination that did not admit to obstacles, he began supplementing his collection. With his increasing financial resources, energy, and imagination, he sought out individuals and dealers who might possess Lincoln material. He accumulated many Lincoln books, but his main goal was manuscript material. His became the greatest of the Lincoln collections. To do justice to the Oliver Barrett story would require a book and Carl Sandburg did just that in 1949, with *Lincoln Collector: The Story of Oliver R. Barrett's Great Private Collection*.<sup>30</sup> He not only was a superior collector, he was intellectually more familiar with the Lincoln story than most of the collectors. He was generous and completely cooperative with Lincoln scholars. He believed the material he had collected was to be used to further illuminate the Lincoln story.

After his death in 1950, his collection was offered to the State of Illinois for \$220,000. The campaign to raise the funds by public subscription failed, though a substantial sum was collected and spent when the "Immortal . . . Lincolniana Collected by the late Oliver R. Barrett . . ." was sold at auction at the Parke-Bernet Galleries on February 19 and 20, 1952. It was the greatest sale of Lincolniana ever to take place. It realized a total of \$265,000. The prices seemed astronomical, but today would be regarded as incredible bargains. Many of the choice items went into institutional collections, either by direct purchase or by future resale or gift. Lincoln's letters to Joshua Fry Speed were bought for the Illinois State Historical Library. His letter to John D. Johnston, his step-



brother, was sold to Foreman M. Lebold and given to Illinois after his death. Alfred Whital Stern bought the Lincoln-Douglas Debates scrapbook and presented it to the Library of Congress. Lincoln's seal was sold to Justin G. Turner and has been resold at auction at least twice since 1952. Rarities from the Barrett Collection are now in the collections of the Library of Congress, the Illinois State Historical Library, the Chicago Historical Society, Indiana University, Brown University, Lincoln Memorial University, the University of Oklahoma, and other institutions. Some of the items are still in private collections.

Frederick Hill Meserve, the greatest collector of Lincoln and Civil War photographs, thrived in this era. Born in Boston in 1865, he became a highly successful member of the textile firm of Deering, Milliken & Company in New York City. In 1902, he purchased a collection of 10,000 negatives which Mathew Brady had been forced to give up in settlement of a debt. Some of these were copy negatives, but over 5,000 were the original negatives. He continued to supplement this collection until, at the time of his death in 1962, it contained several hundred thousand negatives and photographs. In 1911, he published *The Photographs of Abraham Lincoln*,<sup>31</sup> a collection of 100 known Lincoln photographs, each mounted in a book, in chronological order. Only 102 copies were issued. He later published a 28-volume set of *Historical Portraits and Lincolniana*,<sup>32</sup> first issued in 1915. He continued to prepare sets to order until the 1950's. About 12 sets were published in all.

The Meserve heirs recently sold 5,412 of the original Brady studio glass negatives to the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution. It also acquired the only print ever made from the cracked-plate negative of Lincoln's last photograph from life, taken by Alexander Gardner, manager of Grady's Washington Gallery, on Monday, April 10, 1865. It measures 17<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> inches and is identified as Meserve number 100 and also

as Ostendorf number 118. The purchase price was \$919,701, and consisted of an estate tax credit of \$700,000 and \$219,701 in cash.

Others in this era are:

William Eleazar Barton, born in 1861, was a Congregationalist minister, Lincoln collector, and biographer. His collection began as only a working library, but grew to more than 4,000 volumes. It included many items from the John Edgar Burton collection, which had not been sold at the auction in 1915. As a Lincoln student and writer he was at his best when writing about special phases of the Lincoln story, such as the Hooker letter, Lincoln's letter to Mrs. Bixby, the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln's religion, and his parentage. The University of Chicago purchased the collection after Dr. Barton's death in 1930. The Barton family contributed one-fifth of the purchase price.

James Wills Bollinger, born in Geneseo, Illinois, graduated from the State University of Iowa in 1889, and immediately began the practice of law in Davenport. For thirteen years, between 1898 and 1911, he was a judge of the Seventh Iowa District. He was always to be known as "Judge." He was meticulous in the selection of material for his collection. He enjoyed the challenge of the search for rarities and was remarkably successful in his quest. In his will, he bequeathed his collection to his alma mater. It was installed in the Special Collections Department of the State University of Iowa after his death in 1951.

Albert Henry Griffith, of Fisk, Wisconsin, was probably the most thorough collector of periodical and ephemeral Lincolniana. In 1930, the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company purchased the Daniel Fish and the Albert H. Griffith collections. It was a perfect match. The Griffith Collection filled in the gaps of the library assembled by Fish. They are both now in the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum.

Frederick Ray Risdon, of Los Angeles, became interested in Abraham Lincoln a few years before the centennial, but, like

others, was inspired by the year 1909 and its attendant celebrations and publications. A slight, almost frail man, he nevertheless mustered enough strength to seek out and acquire some of the most remarkable Lincoln rarities known. He accomplished this despite a very moderate income, by superior use of his intellect and a very highly developed collector's instinct. In 1943, Jay Monaghan, the Lincoln bibliographer, said that the Risdon Lincolniana was the largest private collection on the Pacific Coast.<sup>33</sup> On April 15, 1957, just a year before his death, the Risdon Collection, which had been purchased by Occidental College, was dedicated in its new home.

John W. Starr of Millersburg, Pennsylvania, began his interest in Lincoln shortly after the centennial year. In 1915, he was corresponding with Judge Fish, seeking a copy of the latter's address on Lincoln collecting which was delivered before the American Bibliographical Society in 1908. Fish did not have, or ever get, a copy. Neither did Starr, but it appears as number 503 in Oakleaf's bibliography. As an employee of a railroad, it was natural that he would eventually write *Lincoln and the Railroads*,<sup>34</sup> published in 1927. He was the compiler of *A Bibliography of Lincolniana*,<sup>35</sup> which listed 380 titles which were not in the Fish or Oakleaf bibliographies. In his introduction to the volume, Starr comments, "All of the items listed in the main body of the present bibliography of Lincolniana are to be found in the collection of the compiler." His collection exceeded 3,000 titles. It was sold to the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop a year before Mr. Starr's death in 1955. Some of the Starr material is now in the collections of the Library of Congress and Lincoln Memorial University.

Charles Thomas White, the last of the "centennial ten," was tax commissioner of New York City under Mayors Gaynor and Mitchell from 1910 to 1918. He was also a political news writer for the *New York Herald Tribune* from 1898 until 1932, when he moved to Hancock, New York, where he became associate editor of the

*Hancock Herald*. He was the author of *Lincoln and Prohibition* and two other Lincoln titles.<sup>36</sup> His collection of almost 3,000 titles was sold to a Chicago bookseller in 1942. Alfred Whital Stern acquired all of the titles and other items in the White Collection which he did not already possess. They are now with the balance of the Stern Collection in the Library of Congress. Some of the remaining titles were acquired by Lincoln Memorial University. White died in 1954.

#### IV. THE ERA OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN ASSOCIATION AND THOSE WHOM IT INSPIRED, 1923 – PRESENT

The year 1923 saw the revival of the Lincoln Centennial Association, which was to become the Abraham Lincoln Association in 1929. Originally formed in 1908 to prepare for the celebration of the Lincoln centenary, it suspended activities from 1919 until 1923, when it was reorganized to set high standards of scholarship in the study of the life of Abraham Lincoln. In 1925, Paul McClelland Angle became the executive secretary of the Association and, with Logan Hay, a Springfield lawyer, the grandson of Stephen T. Logan and the cousin of John Hay, began a series of publications and projects which brought a high degree of professionalism to the inquiries into the life of the Springfield lawyer who became the president of the United States. It has continued its work and influence since 1923, with a brief interruption from 1952 until 1959. It was in the same period that the Lincoln National Life Foundation, now the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum, began its existence under the generous sponsorship of the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company. It is because of this that the fourth phase of Lincoln collecting is identified here as "The Era of the Abraham Lincoln Association and Those Whom It Inspired." Nine collectors typify the collecting of the period and indicate the change in the character of the collecting to this day.

The scholarly and courtly Frederic Lauriston Bullard quite properly begins this category. He was born in Wauseon, Ohio in 1866 and was graduated from Wooster College in Ohio. After ten years in the ministry, he entered newspaper work in 1907 and continued in that profession for almost forty years, mostly with the *Boston Herald*. His first publication about Lincoln was *Tad and His Father*,<sup>37</sup> published in 1915. While he always had a keen interest in Mr. Lincoln, his collecting did not begin until much later. In 1926, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his editorial, "We Submit," on the Sacco-Vanzetti case.<sup>38</sup> His keen and inquiring mind brought a new insight to some of the special phases of the Lincoln story. His study of the Gettysburg Address is exceeded only by that of Louis A. Warren.<sup>39</sup> His is the soundest inquiry into that baffling mystery—the famous letter to Lydia Bixby.<sup>40</sup> He spoke to the 1941 annual meeting of the Abraham Lincoln Association. His subject was "Abraham Lincoln and Henry Adams, A Contrast in Education."<sup>41</sup> He became a director of the Association and served until his death in 1952. His library of 2,500 pamphlets is now in the Chenery Library of Boston University.

Carl Haverlin of New York City and Northridge, California, was identified by Carl Sandburg as "the best self-educated man I have ever encountered since Abraham Lincoln."<sup>42</sup> Actor, pantomimist with the great Ruth St. Denis, radio pioneer, head of one of the two greatest music licensing companies in the world, writer of science fiction, and the author of the first and only serialized Lincoln story for network radio, he was given an honorary high school diploma from Manual Arts High School of Los Angeles just a few years ago. The diploma was presented by one of his former classmates, General James H. Doolittle.

The Haverlin collections are many and varied. His Lincoln library is superb. His Civil War collection is equally impressive. His agile mind has led him in many directions. In his great library, which occupies a separate building alongside his San Fernando

Valley home, are collections of Shakespeareana, Baconiana, private press publications, science fiction, James Joyce, and dozens of other subjects and authors. His bibliographical knowledge is impressive. He will be 84 years old in June, 1983, but his mind is as active as ever, and it is comforting for a student of Lincolniana to know that, when all else fails, a call to Carl Haverlin may produce the desired information. His business travels took him to every state in the Union and he is a friend of every bookseller. A generous and knowledgeable buyer, he has always been welcome wherever a bookseller presides.

His collection of Lincoln pamphlets and broadsides and similar printed material from the period is one of the best ever assembled. Two of his greatest items, however, are now missing from his collection. He was the owner of one of the three known copies of the first separate printing of the Gettysburg Address published at the *Washington Chronicle* office.<sup>43</sup> The Haverlin copy was loaned for an exhibition in Great Britain depicting the great works of western man, and was lost after the exhibit was completed and before it could be shipped back to its owner. He was also the owner of the letter from President Lincoln to Miss Fanny McCullough, probably the greatest condolence letter ever written. A Texas collector wanted a great Lincoln letter for a collection he was building for his children, and in a moment of weakness, Haverlin sold it. It brought the highest price ever paid for a Lincoln letter up to that time, but Carl Haverlin has never ceased to regret parting with it. One of the greatest story-tellers in the Lincoln fraternity, he reigns over one of the finest one-man resources of the literature of the life and times of the subject who inspired this study.

Henry Horner, born in the same year as Carl Sandburg, 1878, was the 30th governor of Illinois, serving from 1933 until his death, while still in office, in 1940. He began the practice of law in Chicago in 1899 as a member of the law firm of Whitney and

Horner. Whitney was the son of Henry Clay Whitney, author of *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln*.<sup>44</sup> The gift from Whitney of Lincoln's copy of one of his favorite books, Joseph Glover Baldwin's *The Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi*,<sup>45</sup> humorous stories of a country lawyer riding the circuit, started Horner off in style as a Lincoln collector. In 1931 he wrote, "I have from five to six thousand items, although there are many items that I do not have. . . ." <sup>46</sup>

When he became governor, his collection was installed in one of the rooms of the Executive Mansion in Springfield. A bachelor, Horner would invariably go into the library and admire his books, and carefully line them up on the shelves before going to bed. When Carl Sandburg delivered a tribute to Horner on the occasion of the opening of the Horner Room at the Illinois State Historical Library, he referred to the collection as a "bachelor's children."<sup>47</sup> Horner bequeathed his great collection to the Illinois State Historical Library. This gift, merged with what that institution already had, gave it one of the greatest collections in existence. A political commentator at the time remarked, "At least there was one governor who gave the state something."<sup>48</sup>

The other great story-telling Lincolnian was William H. Townsend of Lexington, Kentucky. One of the nation's leading attorneys, he assembled a remarkable collection, mainly from the 1920's to the 1940's. He was the author of many books, the most significant of which was *Lincoln and his Wife's Home Town*,<sup>49</sup> which appeared years later in revised and expanded form as *Lincoln and the Bluegrass*.<sup>50</sup> He captivated audiences for many years with his delightful speech about Cassius Marcellus Clay, "The Lion of Whitehall."<sup>51</sup> One of the first Lincoln books he read was Barton's *The Paternity of Abraham Lincoln*.<sup>52</sup> When Townsend sent the volume to Dr. Barton for an inscription, it began a friendship which resulted in the two men journeying through Anderson County, west of Lexington, in search of the history of the Sparrow and

Hanks families. He became a close friend and adviser to Emilie Todd Helm, Mary Lincoln's half-sister and the widow of Confederate General Ben Hardin Helm. He ultimately became the owner of Helm Place, the perfect place for a great collection of Lincolniana.

With a superb lawyer's logic, he sought out individuals whose families had some connection with the Lincoln story and was able to acquire some notable items of Lincolniana. He also used excellent taste in his purchases. Among his treasures were the check reading "Pay to 'Tad' (when he is well enough to present) Five Dollars," a bribe from the President to persuade the boy to take his medicine; David Turnham's copy of the *Revised Laws of Indiana*,<sup>53</sup> the volume in which Lincoln first read the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution; and the President's letter to William P. Dole, written on April 14, 1865.<sup>54</sup> The Townsend Collection was sold to Justin G. Turner of Los Angeles a few years before the Kentuckian's death in 1964. Those who knew him can still hear his voice and be reminded of another Kentuckian who would lean back in his chair and say, "That reminds me of a story. . . ."

Alfred Whital Stern was a boyhood friend of Henry Horner. They were both raised in the same section of Chicago. But, unlike the future governor of Illinois, Stern came to the Lincoln story later in life. In 1918, in Atlantic City, he read his first book of Lincoln letters. He was impressed by the simple, direct language of the great Illinoisan. When, some years later, one of his sons had difficulty with his reading, he remembered the Lincoln text and introduced the boy to the words of the Civil War president. This not only helped the youngster, it inspired Alfred Stern to begin collecting the books and pamphlets relating to Abraham Lincoln and his times. Within a few years, he was among the leading collectors in the country. He had two collections growing simultaneously—Lincoln and Civil War. Though he specialized



in printed material, he wanted one great Lincoln letter. An opportunity presented itself in 1941, when the collection of Colonel Louis J. Kolb of Philadelphia was offered for sale at the William D. Morley Gallery in Philadelphia. Colonel Kolb, a highly successful businessman and a great philanthropist and humanitarian, had assembled a fine, but selective collection of rarities. The Lincoln section of his collection contained President Lincoln's famous letter to Major General Joseph Hooker, dated January 26, 1863. The letter was catalogued as "probably the finest Lincoln letter extant."<sup>55</sup> In this letter Lincoln placed Hooker in command of the Army of the Potomac, ending with "And now, beware of rashness—Beware of rashness, but with energy, and sleepless vigilance, go forward, and give us victories." This was the letter Mr. Stern wanted and he got it. His agent paid \$15,000 for it, at the time the highest price ever paid for a Lincoln letter.

He continued to add to his great collections and finally, in the 1950's, decided he couldn't do justice to both. He therefore donated his Civil War collection to the Illinois State Historical Library. This not only gave Illinois a fine Civil War collection to supplement the Horner Collection and placed the books of the two old friends side-by-side, but also provided Alfred Stern with room in his apartment on Lake Shore Drive in Chicago for additional Lincolniana. When the Charles T. White Collection became available, he purchased everything in it that he did not already own. He bought sections of the John W. Starr and H. M. Povenmire Collections, and at the Barrett sale, authorized his agent to acquire the Lincoln-Douglas Debates Scrapbook, one of the great Barrett treasures. Before his death, the Stern Collection was given to the Library of Congress, along with an endowment to enable the institution to add to its Lincoln holdings. It is installed near the library of Thomas Jefferson. Mr. Stern passed away in 1960.

Four other collectors complete our representative group of collectors in this era. Emanuel Hertz, a New York attorney whose

brother was the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, was the author or editor of several books and innumerable pamphlets. His fine collection of books, pamphlets, manuscripts, medals, and other items was sold in four sessions at the Anderson Galleries in New York in November, 1927. Masaharu Mochizuki of Tokyo, Japan, is undoubtedly the oldest living Lincoln collector. He is in his 97th year. He was originally inspired by the Lincoln story when he visited the United States during the year of the centennial, 1909. Twice his Lincoln collections were destroyed—in the Kanta earthquake disaster of 1923 and during the Tokyo bombing in 1945.<sup>56</sup> After World War II, he began again. His collection of almost 2,000 items was given to Meisei University, Tokyo, in 1961. It is in a section of the university now known as the Tokyo Lincoln Center.

Thomas Irwin Starr of Detroit belonged to the class of collector-scholars. The editor of *The Michigan Bell* for 15 years, his intellect and superior taste made up for his lack of capital. He built a great collection, which helped sustain him intellectually when he was stricken with multiple sclerosis in his middle years. He was only 62 years old when he died. His collection was purchased for the Dearborn Institute in Greenfield Village. Justin George Turner was an attorney and investment executive who was born and lived in Chicago until 1942, when he moved to Los Angeles. His collecting interests were many, but Lincoln was his great love. Many fine items from the Barrett Collection were purchased for him, including the Lincoln seal and the manuscript of the speech on “Discoveries and Inventions.”<sup>57</sup> He purchased William H. Townsend’s collection, as I previously mentioned. His collection of Lincolniana was sold in 1967 at the Hamilton Galleries.

With the coming of the latter half of this century, collecting techniques changed. Smaller homes and apartments encouraged, in fact, made a necessity of, selective collecting. No longer would there be “all-inclusive” collectors who would seek to own every

item of Lincolniana if possible. There had always been selective collectors, but now the roll grew rapidly. In the past, there was James Rosenthal, whose large collection of Lincoln prints, engravings, cartoons, etchings, and other illustrative material relating to Abraham Lincoln is now in the Chicago Historical Society. Mr. Rosenthal, who was born in 1859, would often reply to persons who asked if he had known Abraham Lincoln, "No, but my children went to school with him." Martin Luther Houser, of Peoria, set out to own every book in the identical edition which could be established to have been read by Abraham Lincoln. He wrote several monographs on the subject. His collection was donated to Bradley University in 1950, the year before his death. Harlan Mahlan Povenmire, a banker in Ada, Ohio, became interested in the campaign biographies of Abraham Lincoln. A late arrival to the Lincoln collecting game, he was influenced by a very knowledgeable bookseller, Ernest J. Wessen, of Mansfield, Ohio. The Povenmire Collection was sold to a Chicago book shop in 1958, a year after Mr. Povenmire's death at age 78.

Otto Eisenschiml, a Vienna-born son of a Civil War soldier, became one of our country's leading chemists. Possessing one of the most brilliant minds of his time, he directed his intellect toward an inquiry into the Lincoln murder. He assembled a first-rate collection and wrote a very provocative book, *Why Was Lincoln Murdered?*<sup>58</sup> He often complained that people did not read the title of the book correctly—it was not *Why Lincoln Was Murdered*. His manuscripts were sold to the Abraham Lincoln Book shop in 1951. After his death in 1963, his family donated his book collection to Chicago's DePaul University.

Foreman "Mike" Lebold was a Chicagoan who collected rare books and friends. He did both superbly. His selective collection of Lincolniana contained many "high spots," including Lincoln's copy of the *Kentucky Preceptor*,<sup>59</sup> a fine Willie Lincoln letter, a page of Lincoln's sum book and a document signed by Thomas Lincoln,

all purchased at the Barrett sale. He also owned Lincoln's copy of Halleck's poems, which had once been in the Kolb collection. After his death, his widow gave the *Kentucky Preceptor* to Indiana University and several other fine items to other institutions. The remainder of the Lebold Collection was sold through a rare book dealer. Lebold was probably the biggest private buyer at the Barrett sale, with Turner close behind.

Henry B. Bass of Enid, Oklahoma, collected Lincoln poetry in memory of his son, who had been killed just as World War II was ending. Bob Bass had memorized the words to Walt Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain!" when he was a little boy. Bass bought the copy of Knox's "Mortality," in Lincoln's hand, at the Barrett sale. He acquired Lincoln's copy of Fitz-Greene Halleck's poems from the Lebold Collection. He died in 1975. In 1980, his collection was formally installed in the Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma—a gift from the Bass family.

Dr. John Kingsley Lattimer, of New York City, has assembled what is undoubtedly the finest private collection relating to Lincoln's death. He is the author of a book on the Lincoln and Kennedy assassinations.<sup>60</sup> Malcolm Stevenson Forbes, publisher of the influential *Forbes* magazine, is one of the great collectors in the world. His collections include Fabrege eggs, miniature ships, toy soldiers, paintings by old masters, American presidential letters and documents, and Lincolniana. In recent years, he has acquired several outstanding Lincoln letters and documents, as well as many Lincoln artifacts. His presence at an auction gallery spells trouble for other would-be buyers. James T. Hickey, of Elkhart, Illinois, is an Illinois farmer, curator of the famous Horner Lincoln Collection, and a collector of Lincolniana, all assembled before he became associated with the Illinois State Historical Library. He has one of the finest collections of letters, documents, and printed materials relating to Lincoln in Illinois.

Frank J. Williams, of Providence, Rhode Island, is one of the

leading contemporary collectors. A prominent attorney, he has been active in various Lincoln organizations, including the Abraham Lincoln Association and the Lincoln Group of Boston. His collection includes many manuscripts reflecting Lincoln's legal career, as well as other phases of the Lincoln story. His collection of printed material includes some of the earliest and rarest pamphlets by and about Abraham Lincoln. Included in his collection are a virtually all-inclusive collection of all of the publications by Frederick Hill Meserve and many prints, photographs, busts and statuary. A fine student of the subject, he has been the leader in many research and commemorative projects dealing with the life, accomplishments, and philosophy of the Civil War president. Lloyd Ostendorf, of Dayton, Ohio, is the owner of the greatest private collection of Lincoln photographs and allied materials. He is also the leading living authority on the subject. Mr. Ostendorf, a talented artist, has probably depicted more scenes and events in the Lincoln story than any other illustrator.

#### IMPOSSIBLE TO CLASSIFY

If I had to select a category or class for the next collector, I might be tempted to call him the greatest "non-selective" collector of rarities. I refer to Philip David Sang, of Chicago, Illinois, who was in his 73rd year when he died in 1975. A very successful and shrewd businessman, Phil Sang collected everything, and in quantity. His holdings were staggering. Since his death, five sales have been conducted by Sotheby-Parke-Bernet, and there will be more coming. His sales have set records for high prices realized. Among the great pieces he owned are the presentation copy of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates from Lincoln to his brother-in-law, Alex Todd; President Lincoln's letter suspending the privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus; the famous letter to Major Ramsey, in which he writes, "Wanting to work is so rare a merit, it should be encouraged";<sup>61</sup> one of the only six known copies of the first print-

ing of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, and hundreds of other items of Lincolniana. In addition, he had the Grant family copy of the General's *Personal Memoirs*,<sup>62</sup> with the cancelled check for \$1,000 issued to Grant before his death and the check for \$150,000 paid to Mrs. Grant as the first installment of the royalties for the books after Grant's death.

The Sang Collection had two sets of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, as well as two sets of the signers of the Constitution. We may never know how many complete sets of presidential letters and documents he owned. Included among the Sang treasures were an expense account written and signed by Paul Revere and John Hancock's order promoting Benedict Arnold to major general. While the Barrett Collection of Lincolniana was the greatest in its field, the Sang Collection is equally impressive. When we consider the enormous scope and quality of the collection, one is likely to conclude that he had assembled the largest private collection of manuscript material ever assembled by an American. In addition, his collection contained a great amount of printed material, artifacts, and other items.

Sang acquired so much that he could not really absorb it all. At the time of his death, material worth many thousands of dollars was still in unopened packages and cartons. He did not have a catalogue or inventory of his collection and he hesitated to invite fellow-collectors to see it. Inquiries from scholars would often be unanswered, not because he didn't want to be cooperative—he simply didn't know where the material could be found. At times he conducted his collecting not as an intellectual pursuit, but as if he were conducting another business. It may have added more tension than pleasure to his life. Nevertheless, he acquired a tremendous collection. The Sang Collection story will become a legend in the history of American collecting.

Space and time considerations do not permit an examination

of the role of the book and manuscript dealer in this study. However, Daniel H. Newhall, Harry E. Barker, Thomas F. Madigan, A.S.W. Rosenbach, George D. Smith, Charles E. Van Norman, Ernest J. Wessen, and many other bibliopoles played a major role in the building of most of the great collections. These men were not only merchants; they were teachers, friends, counselors, and historical detectives. Without their help, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to assemble a great collection. One day in the early 1940's, Alfred Whital Stern was in the book shop of Walter M. Hill, a learned and veteran Chicago dealer. Mr. Stern complained that he did not think Mr. Hill treated him with enough consideration and respect. "Alfred," said Hill, "all of these years, all I have ever received from you is *money*, but you, sir, obtained my *books*."

Here they are, some of the people who admired Abraham Lincoln and assembled collections of materials by and about him so that they could be inspired, enriched, and comforted by the gentle, wise, compassionate, superb statesman and human being. There are many, many more, but there never will be enough time to tell their entire story. Each individual presented here and the many more omitted would each make a fitting and interesting subject for a lengthy book.

They not only assembled great collections, they made a contribution to posterity and the intellectual enrichment of our country. They made Lincoln research in depth possible. Some of them gave their collections to institutions; others, because of economic considerations, could not do so. Fortunately, some of these collections were acquired by institutions in their entirety or in part. With the passage of time, many choice items have found permanent homes in the great libraries of *Lincolniana* by circuitous routes.

They had one thing in common: a love for Abraham Lincoln.

Perhaps, as Vincent Starrett once wrote, they shared something else: "I suggest . . . that when we are collecting books, we are not just collecting books, we are collecting happiness, and if that not be the absolute quested by all of us, I do not know what it is."<sup>63</sup>



*The Five Periods or Eras of  
Lincoln Collecting*

I. THE ERA OF THE FOUNDER AND THE KEEPER OF THE FLAME

Abraham Lincoln	(1809-1865)
Robert Todd Lincoln	(1843-1926)

II. THE ERA OF THE CONTEMPORARIES, 1865-1907

Andrew Boyd	(1836-1905)
John Edgar Burton	(1837-1930)
Daniel Fish	(1848-1924)
Charles W. Frederickson	(1823-1897)
Charles Henry Hart	(1847-1918)
William Harrison Lambert	(1842-1912)
Charles Woodberry McLellan	(1836-1918)
Edward McPherson	(1830-1895)
Osborn Hamilton Ingham Oldroyd	(1842-1930)
William Vaughan Spencer	(1821-1870)

III. THE ERA OF THE CENTENNIAL AND ITS AFTERMATH,  
1908-1922

Oliver Rogers Barrett	(1873-1950)
William Eleazar Barton	(1873-1930)
James Wills Bollinger	(1867-1951)
Albert Henry Griffith	(1871-1948)
Frederick Hill Meserve	(1865-1962)
Joseph Benjamin Oakleaf	(1858-1930)
Frederic Ray Risdon	(1888-1955)
John W. Starr	(1888-1955)
Judd Stewart	(1867-1919)
Charles Thomas White	(1863-1954)

IV. THE ERA OF THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN ASSOCIATION AND  
THOSE WHOM IT INSPIRED, 1923 TO THE PRESENT

Frederic Lauriston Bullard	(1866-1952)
Carl Haverlin	(1899- )
Emanuel Hertz	(1870-1940)
Henry Horner	(1878-1940)
Masaharu Mochizuki	(1886- )
Thomas Irwin Starr	(1903-1965)
Alfred Whital Stern	(1881-1960)
William Henry Townsend	(1890-1964)
Justin George Turner	(1898-1976)

V. THE ERAS OF THE SELECTIVE COLLECTOR, 1865-1983

Henry B. Bass	(1897-1975)
Otto Eisenschiml	(1880-1963)
Malcolm Stevenson Forbes	(1919- )
James Thomas Hickey	(1922- )
Martin Luther Houser	(1871-1951)
John Kingsley Lattimer	(1914- )
Foreman M. Lebold	(1895-1953)
Lloyd Ostendorf	(1921- )
Harlan Mahlon Povenmire	(1879-1957)
James Rosenthal	(1859-1943)
Frank J. Williams	(1940- )

IMPOSSIBLE TO CLASSIFY

Philip David Sang	(1902-1975)
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*Some Other Important  
Lincoln Collectors*

William Abbatt  
E. L. Bangs  
Clark Prescott Bissett  
Valentine Bjorkman  
Herman Blum  
T. J. Borucki  
Louis Carman  
Ervin S. Chapman  
Clarence Cochrane  
Roy P. Crocker  
L. E. Dickey  
Joseph L. Eisendrath, Jr.  
Karl J. T. Ekblaw  
Paul B. Freeland  
Arnold Gates  
Albert H. Greenly  
Sherrill Halbert  
Arthur Fletcher Hall  
George Philip Hambrecht  
John Mitchell Hamer  
Arthur C. Hansen  
Mark Hatfield  
Robert W. Hendee  
William Henry Herndon  
Walter S. Holden  
Frederick Lionel Holmes  
Harlan Hoyt Horner and  
Henrietta (Calhoun) Horner  
Frank B. Howard

Beverly W. Howe  
Stuart W. Jackson  
Nels Jansen  
Craig R. Johnson  
Warren LeRoy Jones  
Katrina Kindel  
Dorothy M. Kunhardt  
Henry W. Lackey  
Victor Levit  
Henry Ernest Luhrs  
Harry J. Lytle  
Anthony L. Maresh  
Abraham Lincoln Marovitz  
Isaac Markens  
Stewart Winning McClelland  
Robert Gerald McMurtry  
Franklin B. Mead  
Verne E. Miners  
David J. Nelson  
Charles W. Olsen  
Roy Dwight Packard  
Edgar G. Rich  
Joseph Richter  
J. Henry Ripstra  
Carl Sandburg  
Sol Satinsky  
Carl W. Schaefer  
Otto L. Schmidt  
Lester O. Schriver

Lorenz G. Schumm  
Fred Schwengel  
Jerome M. Slechta  
William Springer  
Jewell F. Stevens  
Edward C. Stone  
Richard W. Thompson  
Clint Clay Tilton

Walter Trohan  
Elmer R. Underwood  
Otto Unseitig  
Carl Wahlstrom  
Louis Austin Warren  
Jesse William Weik  
William Wyles

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42. Carl Sandburg to Ralph G. Newman, January 5, 1956. The statement was made during the course of a dinner conversation (with Haverlin present) at Sandburg's home, Connemara, in Flat Rock, North Carolina, on the occasion of Sandburg's 78th birthday.
43. *The Gettysburg Solemnities . . .* Washington Chronicle office, 1863. (Monaghan No. 192)
44. Whitney, Henry Clay. *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln*. Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1892. (Monaghan No. 1112)
45. Baldwin, James Glover. *The Flush times of Alabama and Mississippi*. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1853.
46. Letter, 1931.
47. Carl Sandburg to Ralph G. Newman, February 12, 1941. The Henry Horner Collection of the Illinois State Historical Library was dedicated on Friday, February 12, 1941. Prior to his appearance and speech at the dedication, Carl Sandburg and the author took a leisurely walk around the State Capitol and the Centennial Building and exchanged reminiscences about the late Governor. During the conversation, Mr. Sandburg referred to the Lincoln Collection as "bachelor's children." This was inspired by the loving care the Governor bestowed on his books.
48. Walter Trohan, head of the Washington bureau of the *Chicago Tribune* and himself a Lincoln and Civil War collector, made this remark shortly after hearing of the gift. Circa 1953.
49. Townsend, William Henry. *Lincoln and his Wife's Home Town*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1929. (Monaghan No. 3143)
50. ———. *Lincoln and the Bluegrass: Slavery and Civil War in Kentucky*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1955.
51. The first complete presentation of "The Lion of Whitehall" lecture was given by William H. Townsend for The Civil War Round Table in Chicago on October 17, 1953.
52. Barton, William Eleazar. *The Paternity of Abraham Lincoln*. New York: George H. Doran Company, 1920. (Monaghan No. 2439)

53. Coleman, J. Winston, Jr. "A Kentucky Lincolnian" in *Lincoln Herald*, February, 1943, pp. 2-8.

54. Abraham Lincoln to Commissioner of Indian Affairs William P. Dole, April 14, 1865, in Basler, Roy P., ed. *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*. VIII, p. 410. This is the only example of Lincoln's writing on the last day of his life, except for a one-line note to General Grant.

55. The Hooker letter was purchased for Alfred Whital Stern at an auction conducted by the William D. Morley Galleries in Philadelphia on November 17, 1941, for what was then considered the enormous price of \$15,000.

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57. For information on Lincoln's "Discoveries and Inventions" lectures, see Basler, Roy P., ed. *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*. III, pp. 356-363. The copy of Lincoln's second lecture on "Discoveries and Inventions," given on February 11, 1859, was acquired for Justin George Turner at the Oliver Barrett sale at the Parke-Bernet Galleries in New York on February 19, 1952.

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60. Lattimer, John K. *Kennedy and Lincoln. Medical and Ballistic Comparisons of Their Assassinations*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980.

61. Abraham Lincoln to Major Ramsey, October 17, 1861, in Basler, Roy P., ed. *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*. IV, p. 556.

62. Grant, Ulysses S. *Personal Memoirs*. New York: Charles L. Webster, 1885-86.

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## RALPH GEOFFREY NEWMAN

Ralph Geoffrey Newman, bookseller and historian, was born in Chicago in 1911. He opened his first antiquarian book store in 1933 and established the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop in 1940, a mecca for Lincoln students and collectors all over the country. Mr. Newman has been at the central hub of the great wheel of Lincoln interest for five decades. Appraisals of the personal papers of presidents and generals have increasingly occupied his time.

A man of irrepressible energy with a fertile and inventive mind, Mr. Newman has headed, shaped, aided, rescued, or advised dozens of important historical institutions and organizations. He is particularly noted for founding the first Civil War Round Table in America.

Mr. Newman is the author, coauthor, or editor of numerous works, including the following books: *The American Iliad* (1947), *Lincoln for the Ages* (1960), *Abraham Lincoln: An Autobiographical Narrative* (1970), and *Abraham Lincoln: His Story in His Own Words* (1975).

Mr. Newman resides in Chicago and remains active as a manuscripts dealer and appraiser, a bookseller, and a historian.

1985

JAMES M. MCPHERSON

*How Lincoln Won the War with Metaphors*

1986

FRANK E. VANDIVER

*The Long Loom of Lincoln*

1987

JOHN Y. SIMON

*House Divided: Lincoln and His Father*

1988

JEAN H. BAKER

*"Not Much of Me": Abraham Lincoln as a Typical American*

